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ABSTRACT

The reading and writing abilities of children work together from the inception of thought to produce literacy. Children can read and write for learning and enjoyment. Each activity enhances the other's development at all levels, thus, writing should not be held back until reading is accomplished at a set level. Children come to school rich in language, and it is up to teachers to "prime the pump," tap the schema, and prove it to them. Then learning to read and write becomes a joy, personal and private, or cooperative and shared. Teachers can get started in this venture by: (1) creating a desire to read and write by reading to the class, daily; (2) setting up an environment that is stimulating and rich in vocabulary; (3) providing centers that contain all of the writing tools needed; (4) writing "story starters" on index cards for students to select; (5) setting up an expository writing center in the classroom; (6) providing a list of ideas that students can expand upon; (7) letting students share their writing products with other classrooms; and (8) most important, providing time each day for reading and writing activities to evolve into products of student creativity. (Four figures are included; 48 references are attached.) (RS)

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Elizabeth McAllister

THE THOUGHT/READING/WRITING CONNECTION:HOW TO CONNECT

Introduction

This chapter will discuss ways that the reading and writing abilities of children work together from the inception of thought to produce literacy. Research about the receptive and expressive modes of communication will be explored, followed by examples to implement a strong integrated reading program that hinges on connections of thought, language, and expression.

What is the Connection?

The connection is fluid and continuous. Thought must be primed by some stimulus. Thought is not evoked by a void (just) to rest in the subconscious. Each thought that is sparked to consciousness reaches into the mind's storage of knowledge (schema), changes the schema with each additional stimulus, and thus, taps other thoughts to connect ideas from another area of stored knowledge. Look at the diagram below to follow the process.

[insert diagram]

Through this flow of thought to shared literacy, four components, or cue systems, interplay. These cue sytems are pragmatics, semantics, syntactics, and graphophonics. A short discussion follows.

Pragmatic Cues. Pragmatics are the content/context

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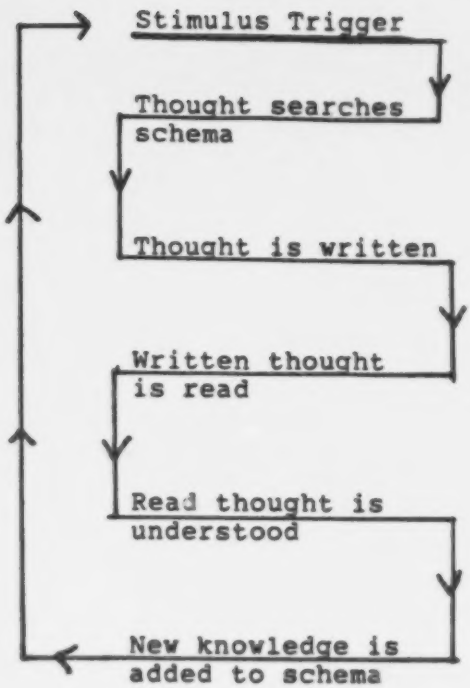

Literacy Connections

of the stimuli that is presented. The reader uses prior knowledge to construct the intended meaning of the author and to identify words that match up with that construct of thought. If the student picks up a book about a trip to the zoo, and that student has been to the zoo, descriptions about the sights, sounds, and even smells will be anticipated and perceived by the reader. The author's intent, message, and situational context gives the reader the overall mental picture to focus upon (Morgan, 1983; Wixon, 1984; Myer and Rice, 1984; and, Goodman and Goodman, 1983).

Semantic Cues. The semantic cueing system of language attaches meaning to the contextual situation. Interacting with the pragmatic cues, the reader personalizes the reading experience by pulling together everything that s/he knows about the world and about language communication (Goodman, Watson and Burke, 1987; Schvaneveldt and Ackerman, 1977; Nicholson and Hill, 1985; and Morgan, 1983).

Syntactic Cues. Syntactic cues, or textual structure, assist the reader in understanding how an author organizes ideas. Schema for story form, based on the reader's experience with narrative text, will surface to help the reader follow the storyline. Expecting the author to set up a problem and follow through to a solution directs the expectations of the reader to the end of the story (Mandler, 1984; Schmitt and O'Brien, 1986; and, Whaley, 1981). Also, experience with expository text gives the reader a framework of

the organization of concepts and content in the text. Expository patterns of presentation will offer an enumeration pattern, chronological pattern, cause-effect pattern, compare-contrast pattern, explanation pattern, or problem-solution pattern. Identifying and recognizing the pattern of expository text places the reader in the position to watch for signs and signals that enhance understanding (Garner, 1986; Myer and Rice, 1985; Adams, 1990; and, Morgan, 1983).

While reading, students use the schema of how words are arranged in sentences to support their interpretation of the meaning. Readers and writers share word order and morphology to structure language. Readers combine the pragmatic and semantic information with knowledge about language structure. Even when children deviate from text, they will replace nouns with nouns and verbs with verbs.

Graphophonic Cues. Readers and writers must possess knowledge about the marks and squiggles on the page. They must know and combine orthography, sound/letter correspondence, lengths and shapes of words, and punctuation marks. They must conceptualize space association with word boundaries, graphic aids, and typographical features such as boldtype or italics, in conjunction with pragmatic, semantic, and syntactic cues (Mason, 1980; Drake and Ehri, 1984; Ehri and Wilce, 1987; May, 1990; Adams, 1990; and, Graves, 1983).

Experiences with oral and print language assist both the reader and the writer. Learners develop control of phonics and graphic symbols by using written language and by writing

(Henderson and Beers, 1980; Dobson, 1985 and 1989). According to Langer (1986), significant relationships are found between the reading/writing variables of strategic thinking processes, examining knowledge use, planning, purpose setting, and metacognition. The cyclical combination could have a positive outcome in terms of achievement or instructional efficiency (Shanahan, 1980; and, Stotsky, 1983).

Since reading and writing processes are closely connected, if writing is to be learned, more instructional emphasis is essential (Graves, 1978; and, NAEP, 1981. Unless children are given the opportunity to write, writing knowledge cannot be applied to reading development; therefore, both reading and writing should be taught daily.

Reading and writing should be introduced from the earliest grades. Prior to school, children are exposed to print through parent-child story reading (Sulzby, 1985) and environmental print (Harste, Woodward, and Burke, 1984). Through this early exposure, reading concepts become a part of the child's schema of books, stories, and signs (Mandler, 1984; and Au and Kawakanni, 1986).

Regarding writing, different circumstances emerge. Often the introduction of writing to compose is delayed until children "learn about" reading. This is an unnecessary delay. Very young children with limited reading ability or sparse knowledge can learn to write (Gundlach, 1982). Their early writings reflect metacognitive understanding of the

conventions and concepts used in our writing system (1) left-to-right order, (2) spacing, (3) punctuation, (4) use of text, and, (5) graphophonics noted in invented spelling (Ferreiro and Tebernosky, 1982; Gibson and Yonas, 1968; Vygotsky, 1978; Garner, 1987; and McNeil, 1987).

According to Juel, Griffith and Gough (1986), research demonstrates that reading and writing are related in the earliest stages. Knowledge moves back and forth between them (Shanahan, 1988). Reading and writing are related in such areas as knowledge and application of symbol-sound correspondence, metacognition, vocabulary meaning, organization of text, and past experience or base schema knowledge. Shanahan also suggests that instruction that does not focus on the overlapping features of reading and writing will not result in transfer of learning. To improve transfer, instruction should encourage students to recognize the interactive elements and similarities of reading and writing.

Reading and writing can become natural extensions of oral language because the child meets print knowing about its language source (Jewell and Zintz, 1990). It is this combination of reading and writing that works, not one or the other. Children who do well in writing tend to do well in reading, and vice versa. This is not a cause and effect relationship; however, the two processes tend to enhance each other's growth (Cheek, Flippo, and Lindsey, 1989).

Some direct research yields these findings:

...There is a significant correlation between reading

achievement and syntactic complexity of writing.

...Writing activities specifically improve comprehension and retention and yeild significant gains in achievement.

...Scores on the Stanford Reading Test were higher for first, second, and third graders who were involved in authorship. (Cheek, Flippo, and Lindsey, 1989; and May, 1990)

Both reading and writing require planning, composing, and revising as the reader and the writer think about the communicating partner. Each one senses comprehension/vocabulary relationships and learns syntactical complexity through the writing venture. At the same time, cueing systems are used by both reader and writer. The writer provides appropriate graphophonic, semantic, and syntactic cues to stimulate the reader's schematic cueing systems. In contrast, the reader activates existing schemata to connect with the author's semantic, syntactic, and graphophonic cues (May, 1990; and, Mandler, 1984).

The processes of learning to read and write about particular things in particular ways involve the content to be learned, reviewed, or enjoyed. Two kinds of writing and reading are narrative and expository. Samples of each will be presented to demonstrate how to connect reading and writing across the curriculum.

Narrative Reading and Writing

In order to generate active thought to tap schema and

illicit verbal involvement, read stories to children (Carr, 1985; McGee and Richgels, 1985; Mason, 1989; and Mandler, 1984). Involve students in group discussion, structured with cue cards. Pass the cards out and read the questions. Anyone can respond. Some kernel questions could be:

...What is the episode about?

...What happened that moved the story forward? Discuss the effect on the direction of the story.

...What goals does the character have?

... Some action brought the character closer to the goal. What was it?

...How did the episode end? Does this seem to be in line with the rest of the story? How?

...What feelings, thoughts, or actions are really caused by reactions to a part of the plot. Dicuss these.

Concurrently involve children in cooperative writing ventures. Familiarity with storyline has been given through the above activities. To make sure that the parts of a story are seen as a whole picture, use Figure 1.

[insert Figure 1]

Following is a sample of steps taken with groups of intermediate students. Each group was given four puppets. They were to discuss everything that was noticed about each puppet. One group had an owl, a dog, a frog, and a lobster.

PARTS OF A STORY WEB

COMPONENTS OF A STORY

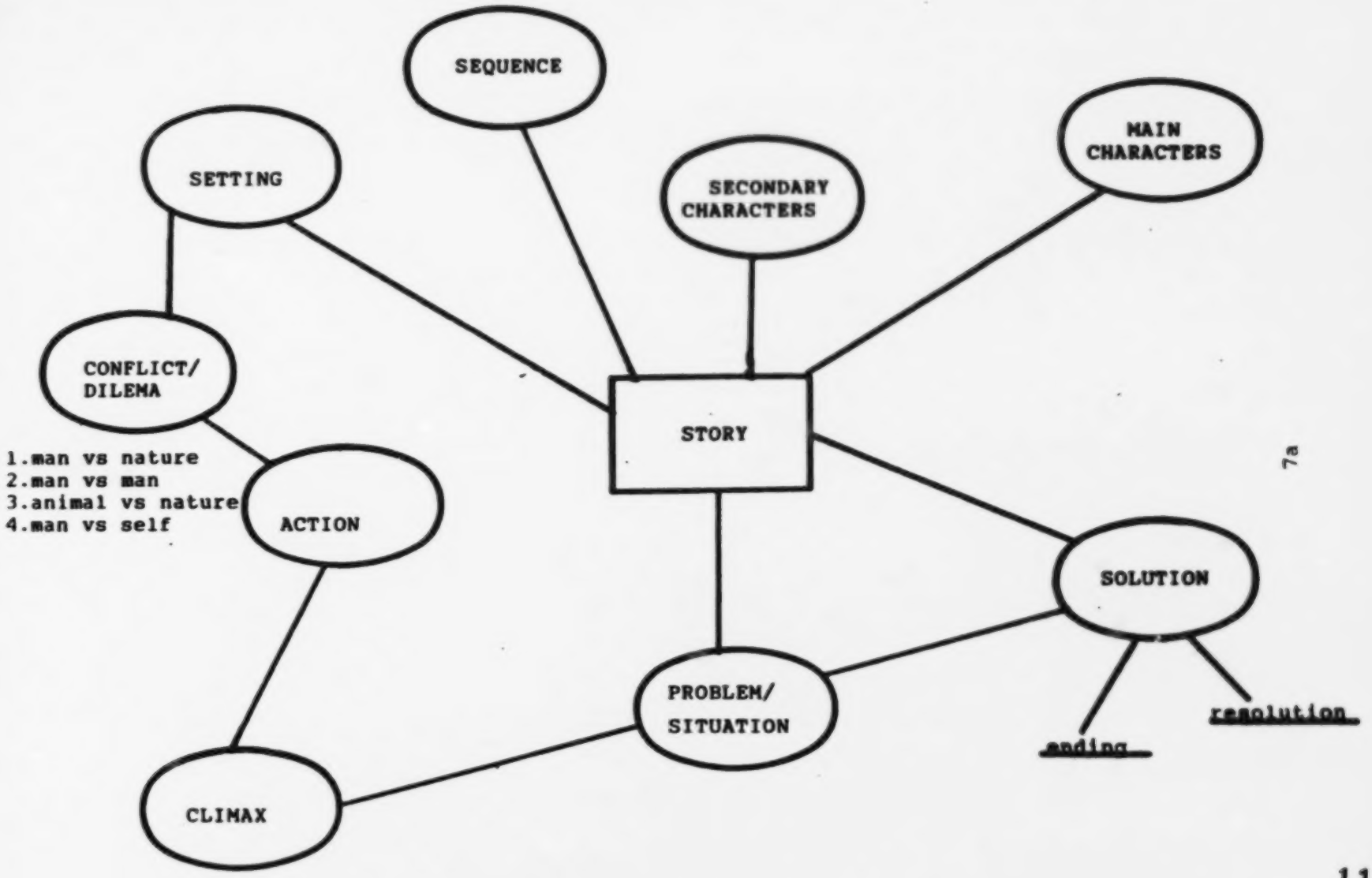

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Figure 1

During the discussion, the students constructed a web about the characteristics of each character. Refer to Figure 2.

[insert Figure 2]

Next, they personified each character by assigning names and then worked on setting, conflict, problem, and solution (Figure 3). After this step, the sequence of the story was developed. Statements were taken from the students without editing (Figure 4).

[insert Figure 3 and 4]

After the students have planned the story frame, they are to fleshout the story in episodes. Each group can choose one episode to work on, frequently joining with other groups to be sure that the story is flowing together. Notice that the title was chosen AFTER the development of a story sequence.

Expository Reading and Writing

In similar ways, expository structure is explored, created, and learned by young students. As they delve into stories that reflect topics that are being studied in the content areas, teaching structure of the expository patterns aids in retention and expression about that content (Cudd and Roberts, 1989; Palinscar and Brown, 1986; May, 1990; Wong and Au, 1985; and Pearson, 1982). Transitions and expansions of sentences are left out when lowering readabil-

SAMPLE DEVELOPMENT OF CHARACTER PUPPETS
LOBSTER, OWL, DOG, and FROG

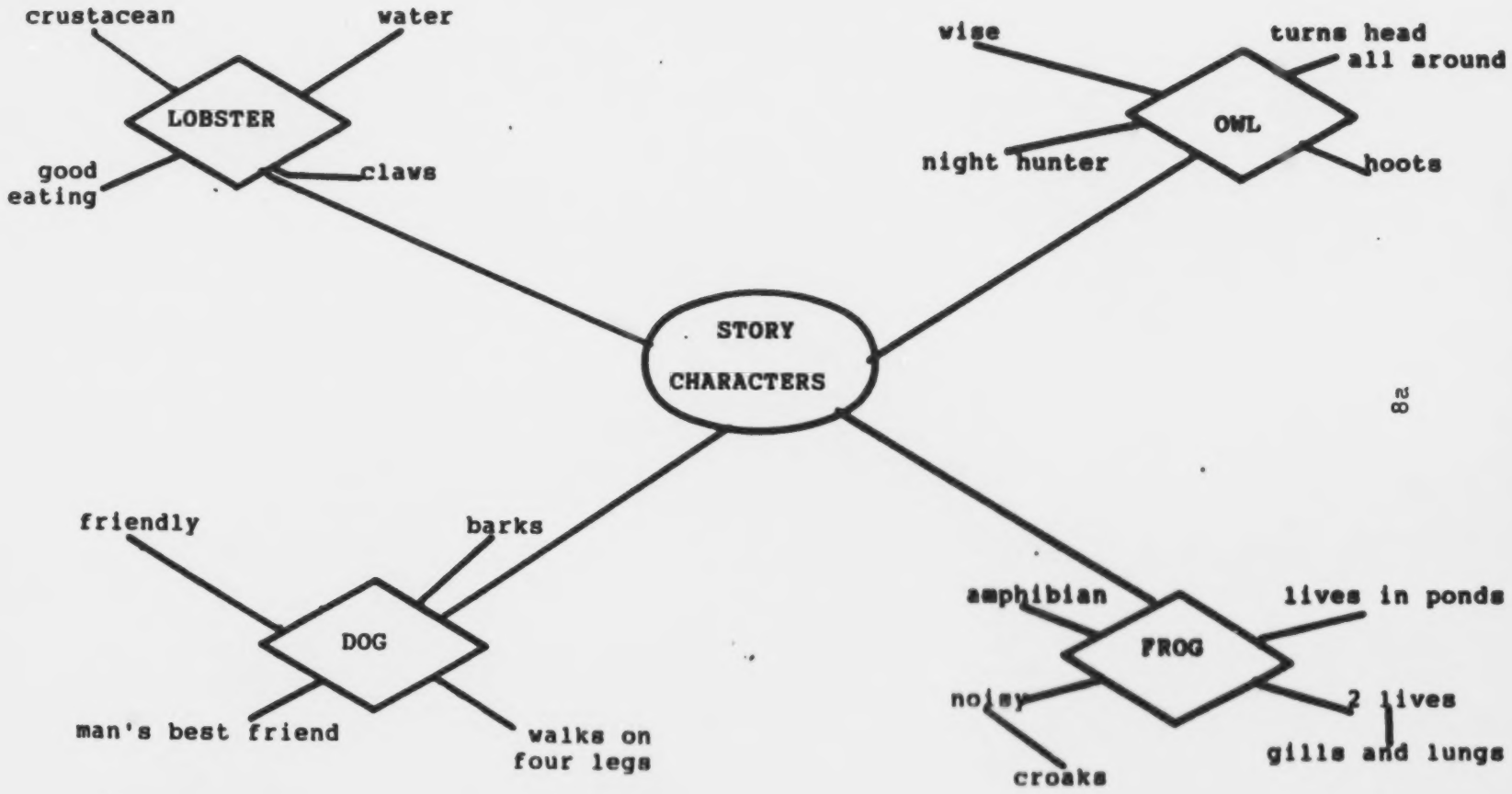
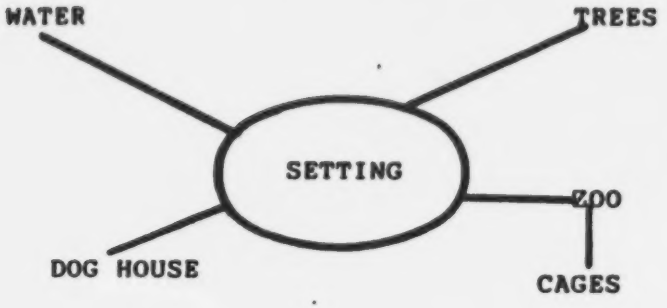
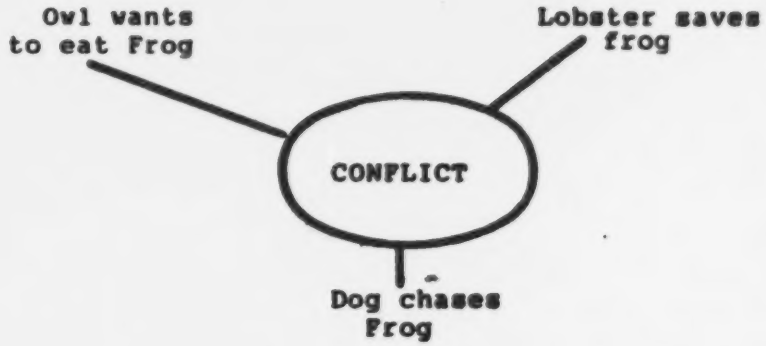


Figure 2

PERSONIFY CHARACTERS: Freddie Frog
Oscar Owl
Louise Lobster
Douglas Dog





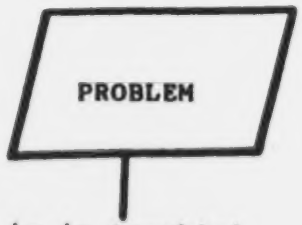


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Figure 3

8b

16

SEQUENCE OF STORY DEVELOPMENT

Statements taken from the class as a story line evolves.

1. TIME OF DAY: evening, lovely quiet evening.

2. SETTING: near a zoo; near a Lobster pond.

3. SEQUENCE:

Freddie Frog has come out of the pond.

He is croaking to his friends.

Douglas Dog hears the noises. He lives next to the zoo.

Douglas Dog runs out of his doghouse to investigate.

Douglas Dog frightened Freddie Frog.

Freddie Frog ran away.

Oscar Owl is sitting on a limb watching the excitement.

As Freddie Frog nears the Lobster pond, Oscar Owl swoops down.

Barking Douglas Dog scares Oscar Owl back into the tree.

Freddie Frog runs under a bush.

Louise Lobster grabs dog on the nose.

Douglas Dog yelps and scurries home.

Freddie Frog thanks Louise Lobster.

Louise Lobster helps Freddie Frog find his way home.

TITLE?

FREDDIE FROG'S FRANTIC FOLLY

Figure 4

8c

ity. Children do not see relationships without the help of signal words such as although, because, and others. Therefore, they are not familiar with content structure. We, as teachers, can impose this structure (for comprehension) over content by presenting content paragraph frames. This offers a chance for exposure to variable structure and helps to increase interest while bridging narrative to content (Cudd and Roberts, 1989; and, Palinscar and Brown, 1986).

Some essential expository patterns of writing that can be dealt with in the early grades are sequential, comparison, contrast, supporting details, and reaction frames. Also, graphic organizers enhance understanding of essential information and of how this information hangs together. This creates the scaffolding of prior knowledge to expand and connect new knowledge (Palinscar, 1986; Pearson, 1982; Carr, 1985; and, McGee and Richgels, 1985).

Complex sentences, rather than simple or compound sentences, are the basis of good writing (May, 1990). One way to begin the development of expanded expository sentences is to use transparency sentence strips for manipulation of a sequential frame. All sentences are placed out of order on the overhead projector and read with the teacher. As discussion ensues, decisions are made about the correct sequence. The finished product is a complete paragraph. After all sentences have been replaced, move the first sentence to the right to demonstrate indentation of the first sentence in a paragraph. See the example below.

Two robins had a family in our tree.

First, the mother bird laid the eggs in the nest.

Next, she sat on them for a long time.

At last, the robins had four noisy babies.

After demonstrating the sequential pattern, and assuring that the appropriate terminology is understood, partially completed paragraphs can be given to the students for them to complete. Examples follow.

Sequence Frame:

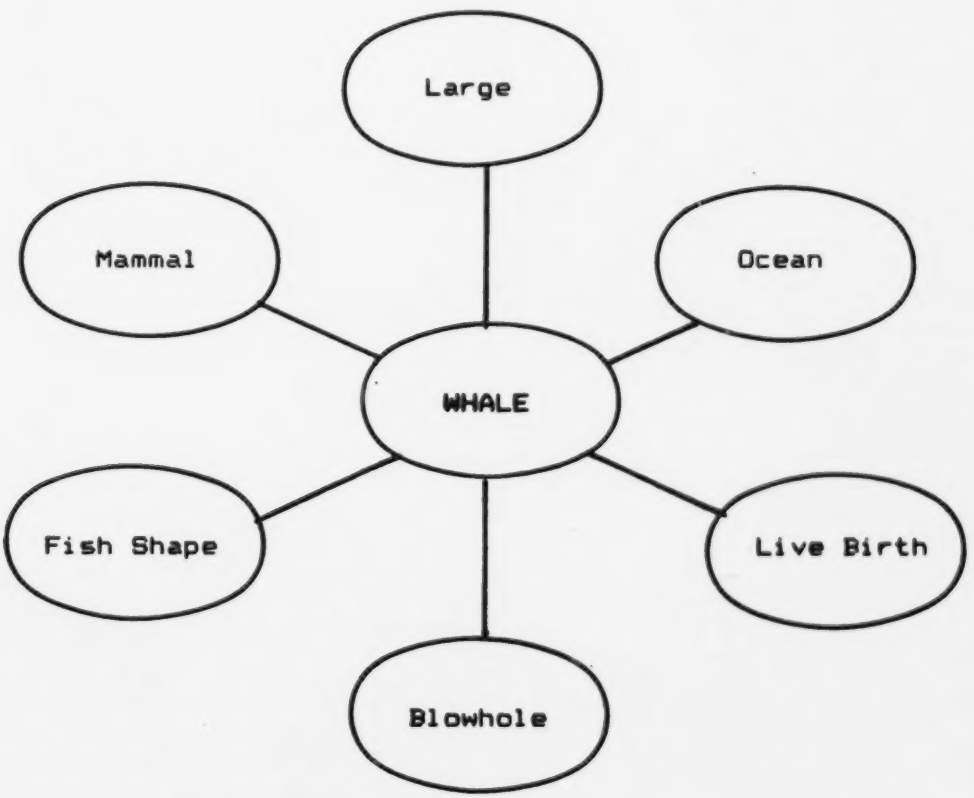
I learned some interesting facts about birds from this reading. Mother and father birds prepare their nest for the new family. First,_____
_____.
Next, _____
_____.
When the nest is finished _____
_____.

Supporting Details Frame:

Some birds are funny to watch. For instance,
_____.
Another interesting and funny thing is_____
_____.

These simple frames are just a beginning. As the content becomes more laden with concepts and specialized and technical vocabulary, students need the writing experience to process complex ideas in their own terms. For example, after reading a textbook sample about whales, students can use expository writing to learn. Note the expanded instructional sequence that can be followed in order to develop new knowledge and understanding across the curriculum.

When the reading material is presented, use a semantic web to tap the existing prior knowledge, or schema, of the students.



While students are reading the context, carefully develop paragraph analysis to address any conceptual or vocabulary problems. Refer back to the semantic web to add new found knowledge or to correct misconceptions. Ask additional questions from the web. Illicit questions about whales from the students and list these on the board. Then, break the class into groups to search for answers to their curiosities. Each group will collect the information and write it for the rest of the class to read. Here is a sample of some possible frames to use with this topic.

Comparison Frame:

Although whales are sea mammals, they are like other mammals in many ways. First,_____ _____.
Second, they _____ _____.
Finally, _____ _____.

Contrast Frame:

Whales differ from other mammals in several ways. For example, _____ _____while other mammals ___ _____.
Another thing is _____ while _____.

From here, any errors that were noted on the initial semantic web can be dealt with in a reaction frame. This corrects misconceptions and ties partial prior knowledge to new existing knowledge, thus, scaffolding instruction.

Reaction Frame:

At first I thought that whales _____

_____.

But, after reading this selection, I know that

_____

_____.

I also learned that _____

_____.

These samples are not inclusive. The wording can be changed according to the need at hand. Extensions through the curriculum may be made to further enrich the study and to expand into whole language. Books on whales, both fact and fiction, should be made available. In language arts, students can write to record data, or write to develop a storyline...personifying a whale...becoming the whale. For example: **A Day in the Life of Wally/Wilhemina Whale.**

Groups can construct a large wall mural of animals of the deep, showing habitats, endangered species, and body structure/skeletal models (art and science). Articles about the whales that were stuck in the channel off the coast of California or the ones that were iced-in in Alaska can be

used in social science and science. Their migration patterns can be traced on a large map made by one of the groups. Many shared writing activities can evolve from this. As to not exclude math, data can be tabled, and, size comparisons of different kinds of whales can be shown on a graph, along with paragraph frames conparing and contrasting the information. And, measurements of whale migration distances can be charted and this information can be presented in expository writing.

These are just a few suggestions for connecting reading and writing to learn. There are endless possibilities that can spark interest and maintain that interest over time. Students get excited when their own creative production becomes class content material.

Writing to Read for Enjoyment

Imagination is a great tool for loosening ideas and creating stories...just for fun! One technique that I have used with noted enthusiasm from students is the Pass-Along-Writing (PAW). The class is divided into groups of three or four students. Each group is given a sheet of paper containing a story starter. One student is to record the other students' ideas as they evolve into a storyline. Continuous narrative is created for ten minutes, after which the paper is passed to another group. Each group then reads the storyline that has been created to that point and adds to that story for ten minutes. This continues for four or five passes. Each group has been given a different story starter,

thus, yielding four or five finished stories. At the end of the allotted time, each group reads the whole story to the class. Absolute hilarity breaks loose. Each story becomes very involved and takes on unexpected twists and turns, and unusual episodes evolve through this continuous dialogue from each group. Teachers say that the carryover is tremendous. Students are heard discussing expansions of the stories at the lunchtables. They ASK to be allowed to continue the story development. What more can we ask of student enthusiasm and creativity?

From here, story episodes can take form and go through editing and rewriting as groups "adopt a story" to flesh out into a "book"...chapters and all. One would be hard pressed to suggest that learning is not taking place through this activity.

Following are a couple of stories that were completed by two groups of students. Each unedited pass-along is starred in order to trace development,and the initial story starters are shown in boldtype. The story starters are adapted from **Fantasy Fling** by Paula Corbett (1984).

Story 1:

> **In the Galactic Year 2050, the last remnants the once-mighty Andromedan Army, under the command of General Gamo Gunzer, occupied a few of the lesser planets. General Gunzer had grown old and slow. He prayed for a warrior with a bold plan to save them.**

* Meanwhile, back on Planet Zork, a beautiful young girl, Shawtana, dreamed of fulfilling her destiny of leading her planet to independence. But, the leaders of Zork did not want a woman as their leader. Therefore, Shawtana left Zork and found Andromeds desperately searching for a leader.

* She entered Andromeda, dressed in her brother's combat flight suit, determined to prove her leadership ability and military skill. Boldly she entered the office of General Gamo Gunzer, convincing him to allow her to command his smallest troup. As she left, General Gunzer said he had not seen such a fighting "man" in years.

* General Gunzer put her in charge of a small but powerful special forces unit. These "men" admired their courageous new leader because she led them into the most violent conflict which resulted in the victory of Andromedan.

* On the day of the victory celebration, General Gunzer pinned a medal of honor on the new commander. He realized that Shawtana was not a man but the crowd cheered. General Gunzer realized her ability and stepped down from the position of power. This allowed Shawtana to become the new general of Andromeda.

Story 2:

Once upon a time in a land of long ago and far away, there lived a princess whose one wish was to be wise. She did not wish for wealth or beauty. She knew that someday she would rule but she wanted to do so with wisdom.

* She put forth all the effort she could to find out as much information as possible about the kingdom that she would rule. She visited every home to become acquainted with the people of the kingdom.

* One day, the princess knocked on the door of an isolated cottage. A strange little man came to the door and told the princess he had been waiting for her. Much to her surprise, he told her of his magical powers and how he could make her the wisest person in the kingdom. Her wish would be granted if she performed three unusual tasks.

* One of the tasks was that the princess had to work as a maid in one of the cottages in the village. Secondly, she was to take care of the orphans that roamed around the countryside. Third, she was to marry the strange old man.

* After working among the people for a time, the little princess learned about the hardships of the peasants there. She was saddened by the number of children who were orphans in the land. She had such compassion on them that she decided to take

them all into the palace and take care of them.

* The little princess decided that she did not need the magic of the strange old man in order to be wise enough to rule the kingdom, so she did not marry him. In fact, after learning that he was the cause of so many orphans, the old man was banished from the kingdom forever and the people of the village were protected by the little princess who would someday become their ruler.

Summary and Implications

Children can read and write for learning and enjoyment. Each activity enhances the other's development at all levels, thus, writing should not be held back until reading is accomplished at a set level. Children come to school rich in language and it is up to us, as teachers, to prime the pump, tap the schema, and prove it to them. Then, learning to read and write becomes a joy, personal and private, or cooperative and shared.

How can the teacher get started in this exciting venture with students? Here are a few suggestions.

1. Create a desire to read and write by reading to the class, daily.
2. Set up an environment that is stimulating and vocabulary enriched.
3. Have centers that contain all of the writing tools needed: a variety of paper products, pens, pencils, cards with ideas, art materials to construct book

covers, scissors, stapler, brads, ribbon, and rulers.

4. Start a "starter can." Write numerous story starters on 3 X 5 cards for students to select. Add to or change these frequently.
5. Set up an expository writing center. Include informative books on interesting topics that are being covered in the content areas. Be sure to have library books of the topics on hand, too. Provide sample paragraph frames for the students to use as expository patterns for their writings.
6. Provide a list of ideas that students can pair to expand. Include activities that cross the curriculum, such as those shown with the whale topic.
7. Let students share their stories and products with other classes.
8. Most important, provide TIME, each day, for reading and writing activities to evolve into products of student creativity.

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